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Governor Recognizes Environmental Leaders at State House Ceremony

Businesses, students and green hotels recognized for environmental Excellence

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Jim Douglas today held a State House ceremony to honor the environmental achievements of businesses, hotels, organizations and schools at the annual Governor’s Awards for Environmental Excellence and Pollution Prevention. Businesses displaying dedication to environmental excellence, winners of the Vermont School Carbon Challenge and recipients of the Green Hotel distinction were all recognized for their incredible commitment to environmental protection.

“Today’s recipients represent a cross-section of Vermont’s commitment to responsible stewardship of our natural resources,” said Governor Douglas. “Vermont’s rural economy is dependent on a healthy working landscape. The companies and organizations represented today are leaders in what I call the Vermont Way – where our economic and environmental heritage are inextricably intertwined.”

Some of the award winners were making return trips, while others joined the ranks for the first time.

“All winners showed the type of initiative and innovation that drives Vermont’s unparalleled reputation as an environmental leader,” the Governor said.

Vermont School Carbon Challenge

Governor Douglas congratulated the winning schools in the Vermont School Carbon Challenge, who will receive \$5,000 toward a future energy efficiency project. As well as he top team, they will get \$1,000 for an energy project.

The top high school is Hazen Union High School in Hardwick, whose team tallied up almost 23 tons of saved emissions. The winning middle school, with 22 tons saved, is Richmond Middle School in Hanover, New Hampshire – home to Norwich middle school students. The No. 1 elementary school is Salisbury Community School, whose zipCO2 team reduced emissions by 5 tons.

The top team is the Essex High Tech Green Hornets, whose 244 members led the charge to reduce almost 37 tons of CO2 emissions.

“Together, all the schools saved more than 114 tons of carbon emissions. That’s the equivalent of not driving 250,000 miles a year or taking 15 passenger vehicles off the road,” the Governor said. “I am so proud of the work these students have done to lower their carbon footprint.”

The Vermont School Carbon Challenge is sponsored by the following businesses and organizations: Beverage Association of Vermont, Biomass Energy Resource Center, Inc., Cabot Creamery, Casella Waste Management Systems, Inc., Central Vermont Public Service, Efficiency Vermont, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Green Mountain Power Co., VELCO, Vermont Country Store, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, and Vermont Energy Partnership.

This is the 16th year for the Environmental Excellence and Pollution Prevention awards, which are given out to recognize an array of accomplishments. Winners included:

Governor’s Awards for Environmental Excellence and Pollution Prevention

Contribution to a more sustainable future:

- Center for Sustainable Innovation, Thetford Center, for its “triple bottom line accounting method” that measures and reports sustainability performance of organizations and businesses.
- Green Mountain Power Corp., for its 20-year energy plan that includes initiatives to produce alternative energy, contracts with methane generators and other renewable and low-carbon power sources.
- New England Slate Co., Poultney, for energy efficiency and low environmental impact designs in the construction of its new offices and shop.
- Vermont Sustainable Heating Initiative, Essex, for its pilot project that united high school and college students with adults to promote sustainable heating by raising enough money to provide two families with wood pellet stoves.

Environmental excellence in resource conservation:

- DEW Construction Corp., Williston, for its “resource protection program,” which incorporates recycling and salvage into its construction operations. In building its headquarters, DEW recycled more than 100,000 pounds, or 51 percent of debris.
- Ethan Allen Operations, Inc., Orleans and Beecher Falls, for implementing 12 energy efficiency projects to reduce 3.8 million kilowatt hours. Ethan Allen also reduced potential air pollutants by 95 percent by making substitutions, reformulations and processing changes.
- Long Trail Brewing Co., Bridgewater Corners, for its “ECO Brew,” (environmentally conscious operations) that makes environmental considerations a business and manufacturing priority. Long Trail reduced water consumption by almost 18 million gallons and reduced effluent in its wastewater treatment system.

Environmental excellence in education and outreach:

- Association of Vermont Recyclers, Montpelier, for its youth environmental coalition, teen-led projects that include an annual youth environmental summit and school-based “trash on the lawn” days.
- John Little, Montgomery Center, for “Bugworks,” a hands-on children’s program that teaches about aquatic ecosystems, with 12 Missisquoi watershed schools and 426 students participating.

Environmental excellence in pollution prevention:

- Burlington Electric Department for installation of a regenerative selective catalytic reduction system – fourth of its kind in the world – to reduce NOx emissions by more than 200 tons per year.
- IBM Wets Engineering Team for reducing by 83 percent the use of perfluoro octyl sulfonate (PFOS) in its semiconductor manufacturing operations.

Environmental excellence in environmental stewardship and resource protection:

- Green Up Vermont, the only grass-roots, statewide program of its kind, with more than 15,000 volunteers who clean up Vermont’s roadsides and waterways.
- IBM Wastewater Engineering Team for reductions of pollutants to its wastewater treatment facility, including: 45 percent less phosphorus; 45 percent less suspended solids; 14 percent less iron; 35 percent less fluoride and 625,000 kilowatt hours per year.

Green Hotels

Green Hotels in the Green Mountain State, a joint program of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and the Vermont Small Business Development Center, is a voluntary environmental recognition program for lodging facilities. A branch of the Vermont Business Environmental Partnership (VBEP), this program was created in 1998 to promote and advance environmentally – and fiscally – sound practices at the lodging establishments throughout the state (www.vtgreenhotels.org). About 92 lodging properties have been designated Green Hotels since the program inception. The following inns and hotels joined the program in 2008:

Deer Brook Inn, Woodstock; Hill Farm Inn, Sunderland; Blue Gentian Lodge, Londonderry; Golden Rose, Bridgewater; Forty Putney Road Bed and Breakfast, Brattleboro; Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee; Hob Knob Inn, Stowe; Thistledown Inn Bed and Breakfast, Morrisville; Barsen House Inn, Addison; The Woods at Wihakowi, Northfield; The Lilac Inn, Brandon; The Inn at Mount Snow, West Dover; Doubletree Hotel, South Burlington; Readmore, Bellows Falls; Applebutter Inn, Woodstock; Riverside Farm, Pittsfield; Brittany Motel, Manchester; Liberty Hill Farm, Rochester;

Stowe Mountain Lodge, Stowe; Inn at Baldwin Creek, Bristol; Sugar Lodge at Sugarbush, Warren; Jackson Gore Inn, Ludlow; West Hill House, Warren; The Hermitage, West Dover; Inn at Stratton Mountain, Stratton.

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